

Chapter 8 EDUCATION AND TRAINING
PROVISIONS UNDER W-2

8.1.0 EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND THE JOB CENTER

The Job Center provides services to all job seekers. W-2 participants and the general public can both benefit from resources available in Job Centers that facilitate the employment process, such as pre-employment workshops, and access to JobNet. The FEP can also refer W-2 participants to other employment and training programs available through integrated Job Centers. The W-2 agency will encourage employers to make training available at the worksite.

The FEP should emphasize the importance of education as an ongoing process. In addition, the FEP should stress life and work skills that help create a better quality of life for the W-2 participant. Low-income individuals with varying educational backgrounds and job history can benefit from employment workshops on interviewing expectations, job search skills and general life skills training.

At the discretion of the FEP, education and training activities may be assigned, as appropriate, to minor dependent children who are mandatory or accept an offer of case management under W-2 Learnfare. The determination should be made on a case-by-case basis.

Local W-2 agency Job Clubs also provide instruction on effective resume writing and interviewing skills. In addition, Job Clubs may provide access to personal computers with Adult Basic Education software packages to increase literacy skills, help determine suitable occupations, and provide keyboarding practice and training on common office software.

The Job Club may supervise the participant's employment search. The Job Club meets on a regular basis and follows a structured group process model. Group dynamics play an important role in the interchange of information, experiences, emotional support and job leads.

8.2.0 EDUCATION AND TRAINING AS PART OF THE W-2 EMPLOYMENT POSITION

Education and training activities are key components of the Community Service Job and W-2 Transition positions. Education and training activities provided by a CSJ/W-2 T provider are counted as work training activities.

In addition to the W-2 employment position work training activities, the W-2 agency may assign CSJ participants up to 10 hours of education and training activities, and may assign W-2 T participants up to 12 hours of education and training activities. Education and training under W-2 should, at a minimum, prepare participants for entry level employment and should focus on short-term, job -specific activities offered at the worksite. (See Education and Training Activities.)

The W-2 program supports life-long learning and encourages participants to pursue further job training once they have established an attachment to the workforce. In addition, child care subsidies are often available for those participating in these educational opportunities. (Chapter 15).

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8.2.1 Aggregating Education and Training Hours

The FEP may aggregate education and training hours to allow W-2 T and CSJ participants access to short-term intensive training programs that require more than 10 or 12 hours of participation per week.

The aggregation policy can be applied and should be considered for education and training programs that a participant can complete within a one-year period with participation in up to 516 hours of education and training activity. In addition to the education and training activities, the FEP must assign some work training activities each week, not to exceed a total of 40 hours of participation per week.

In the case comments section of the Employability Plan, the FEP must document that the aggregation policy was used, the amount of aggregated education and training hours and the expected number of weeks needed to complete the training.

Wisconsin's Technical College system offers many one- and two- semester certificate programs that are accessible to W-2 participants under the aggregated education and training policy.

Example:

Jennifer is found eligible for a Community Service Job. Based on an occupational assessment, she is found to be a good candidate for a short-term intensive training program. Jennifer enrolls at her local technical college in a one-semester certification program, requiring 16 credits. Lecture time and lab work requires her to attend school 26 hours per week for 16 weeks. Using the aggregation policy, the FEP assigns her to participate 26 hours per week in the technical college program. The FEP also assigns another 14 hours of work training activity for a total of 40 hours per week.

Jennifer's total aggregated education and training hours over this 16 week timeframe is 416 hours (26 hours per week x 16 weeks), keeping her well within the policy's one-year completion period and the 516-hour limit .

The goal of this policy is full-time unsubsidized employment. If the agency is unsuccessful in securing unsubsidized employment for Jennifer, her hours of participation in education and training activities are limited to the following:

- For the remainder of the year beginning with the date of her assignment to the education and training program, Jennifer cannot be assigned to more than 100 hours of education and training (516 – 416 = 100).
- One year following the date of her assignment to the education and training program, if Jennifer is still in a CSJ placement, 10 hours per week of education and training activity may be assigned.

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8.2.2 Combining Aggregated Education and Training with Prorated CSJ Policy

A prorated CSJ placement is appropriate for individuals who are already working in an unsubsidized job less than 30 hours per week and where attempts to increase the number of hours in their current job or to find additional unsubsidized employment have not been successful due to the participant's barriers. (See Chapter 7.4.1.4.2.)

In certain circumstances, these individuals would also benefit from an intensive short-term training program using the aggregated education and training policy. When combining the prorated CSJ policy and the aggregated education and training policy, the FEP must keep in mind that total hours of participation, including unsubsidized employment must not exceed 40 hours per week.

Example:

Geraldine works 15 hours per week washing dishes at a local restaurant. After a brief placement in W-2 CMS, the W-2 agency reassesses Geraldine's employability and determines that she is in need of additional training in order to make her competitive for full-time employment. The FEP assigns her to a half-time CSJ.

A prorated CSJ would normally require Geraldine to participate 11 to 15 hours in work training and up to 10 hours of education and training per week. But Geraldine is motivated and would like to participate in a 16-credit training program on metal casting offered through the local technical college. The training program requires Geraldine to be in the classroom and lab 20 hours per week for 16 weeks for a total of 320 hours of education and training. In addition to the training activity, the FEP assigns Geraldine to 5 hours per week of work experience. Geraldine is participating a total of 40 hours (15 hours in unsubsidized employment, 20 hours in education and training and 5 hours in work experience). She is meeting the requirements of the prorated CSJ policy while also benefiting from the aggregated education and training policy.

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8.3.0 EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

All W-2 employment position participants, including those working in unsubsidized positions, may participate in education and training.

Unsubsidized Employment and Trial Jobs

The FEP must conduct an educational needs assessment for any individual for whom they determine that the appropriate placement is unsubsidized employment or a Trial Job. If the individual is in need of basic education, including a course of study meeting the standards established for the granting of a declaration of high school graduation, and the individual wishes to pursue basic education, the activity must be included in the individual's Employability Plan. W-2 agencies must pay for the basic education services identified in the Employability Plan.

Community Service Jobs and W-2 Transitions

The FEP may identify and require up to the allowable maximum education and training hours (10 hours per week in a CSJ, 12 hours per week in a W-2 T position) in addition to work training requirements. The following services may not be available through the Job Center, or at the Job Center's expense. W-2 agencies may, therefore, need to take responsibility for providing these services if included in the Employability Plan.

1. **Skills Training.** Short-Term Jobs Skill Training should be career focused. W-2 agencies can coordinate with the Wisconsin Technical College System to offer certified (or diploma/degree) training programs, and also work directly with employers to develop on-site training opportunities. (See Aggregating Education and Training Hours if necessary.)

These vocational training classes must be tied directly to occupations for which there are job openings in the community. Examples include:

- Basic welding;
- Keyboard/data entry;
- Certified nursing assistants;
- Utility installation;
- Office software;
- Food preparation;
- Electronic assembly;
- Child care;
- Press production;
- Entrepreneurial/small business; and
- Hospitality training.

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2. **Job Skill Development.** Job Centers can provide services including job testing and screenings, mentoring, career exploration/choices, and job coaching. W-2 agencies may coordinate with the Wisconsin Technical College System and the University of Wisconsin-Extension Program or other educational programs to provide a variety of Adult Basic Education opportunities. In addition, many Job Centers have access to interactive computer programs, such as PLATO, which allow the job seeker to train, on a self-paced basis, on many of the following topics:
 - Writing skills;
 - Math skills;
 - Improving literacy;
 - Remedial education;
 - HSED/GED preparation classes;
 - Driver's education;
 - English-as-a-Second Language (ESL);
 - Resume writing/completing job applications;
 - Interviewing techniques, including role playing;
 - Employer expectations; and
 - Co-worker interpersonal relationships.
3. **Motivational Training.** Motivational training is designed to prepare the participant for expectations of the workplace and to help the participant overcome individual limitations. The W-2 agency helps prepare an individual for work by teaching expectations and behaviors necessary to successfully compete in the labor market. Training focuses on building self-esteem and increasing self-confidence. Motivational training includes, but is not limited to:
 - Assessment and work activities related to addressing barriers to employment;
 - Communication styles/personality types;
 - Identifying and developing long-term and short-term life and employment goals;
 - Evaluating work patterns, skills and abilities; and
 - Mentoring, encouragement and support.
4. **Life Skills Training.** Life skills are the tools that provide the basic foundation necessary for parent(s) to participate more fully in the workforce, in lifelong educational opportunities and in community activities. Practical life skills increase a person's self-esteem and facilitate the pursuit of better job opportunities by providing the ability to stabilize family issues. The following are examples of life skills that assist the parent in understanding and managing daily life and family stress in order to succeed in the workplace:

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- Understanding and accepting parental responsibilities;
- Strengthening parental skills/understanding relationships;
- Family budgets;
- Anger management/interpersonal skills;
- Problem solving/decision-making skills;
- Family nutrition/household management;
- Time management;
- How to work with government, legal and school systems;
- How to request reasonable accommodations, knowledge of equal employment laws;
- Selecting quality child care, planning for back-up child care for emergencies and when the child or provider is sick; and
- Appropriate personal grooming/dress.

5. **Technical College Education.** Technical college education programs must also be career focused. If the agency determines that the individual would be unable to obtain unsubsidized employment without additional training, the agency may allow a participant in a CSJ or W-2 T to participate in a technical college education program for up to 15 hours per week if all of the following requirements are met:

- The participant is employed or engages in work under a CSJ or W-2 T for 25 hours per week in addition to class time.
- The participant maintains full-time status in the technical college education program and regularly attends all classes;
- The participant maintains a grade point average of at least 2.0, or the equivalent, as determined by the technical college;
- The hours of participation in the technical college program must be included on the participant's Employability Plan (EP) in the activity plan section (part 3). Missed class time can be sanctioned according to current policy. Including the technical college program on the EP does not obligate the W-2 agency to pay for the program out of its W-2 funding. If the participant has not identified available funding for the program, the agency may require the participant to do so.
- The W-2 agency, in consultation with the Community Steering Committee and the technical college district board, determines that the technical college education program is likely to lead to employment;

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If a W-2 agency determines that an individual is ready for unsubsidized employment either at placement or at some point during participation in W-2, they are not required to place the participant or keep the participant in a CSJ or W-2 T in order to allow the participant to complete a training program. If a participant obtains unsubsidized employment as a result of his or her job search, he or she may be removed from their current placement and offered case management follow-up services regardless of whether or not the individual completed the training program. The individual then has the option of continuing the education program on his or her own.

8.3.1

Voluntary Postsecondary Education Opportunities

W-2 participants are eligible for financial aid resources available to all Wisconsin residents. Improving a W-2 participant's skills, abilities and knowledge can help a participant raise his or her quality of life and increase his or her earning potential. Financial aid resources which may be available include:

- W-2 participants may be eligible for up to two years of child care for voluntary education and training activities. Other low income workers may also receive funding for up to two years of child care for voluntary educational and training activities if they demonstrate an attachment to the workforce and are otherwise eligible. To receive the child care subsidy, the education or training must be approved by the FEP. (See 15.2.0.)
- In addition to low-interest student loans, the student may consider applying for the federal Pell Grant program. Students should be referred to the financial aid office at the institution they are planning to attend for further information.
- The State Higher Education Aids Board can also provide information concerning financial aid grants:

The Higher Education Aids Board can be reached at:

131 W. Wilson Street, Room #902
Madison WI 53702
(608)/267-2214

- The Armed Forces Reserves and state National Guard. In addition to monthly drill pay (based on rank), part-time soldiers in the Wisconsin Army National Guard receive the Montgomery GI Bill (worth up to \$7,124), and a Wisconsin Guard Tuition Grant (up to \$5,098). National Guard Recruiters (located in the Yellow Pages) can provide further information concerning financial aid from the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard and U.S. Armed Forces Reserve units.
- Veterans support through Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER), or Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) staff.